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Christmas Eve at Mulligan's

By

MARIE IRISH

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PAINE PUBLISHING COMPANY
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CHRISTMAS EVE AT MULLIGAN'S

CHARACTERS

PETER MULLIGAN.
NORA MULLIGAN, his wife.
DANNIE, ROSIE, KATIE, } their children.
MRS. O'BRIEN, a neighbor.
PATSY, her son.
BILL JONES, Mulligan's boarder.
MISS HAGEN, a nurse.

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SEP 29 '22

Christmas Eve at Mulligan's

SCENE—The Mulligans' Living Room

Discovered, ROSIE *and* KATIE

ROSIE: Oh, KATIE, don't you want a doll for Christmas? I want one just awful, dreadful, *terrible* bad—not a bad dolly, but I want it so bad that I just can't tell you how bad.

KATIE: Now then, ROSIE, ain't you the naughty girl to be wanting a doll when dear DANNIE is trying to get his eyes well? I don't want *anything* if he can just be made to see, and you know that takes lots of money.

ROSIE: Well, I guess I can wish for a dolly—wishing doesn't cost anything, does it? 'Course, I don't mean I want it bought for me; I just mean I want it. That isn't the same, not a bit.

KATIE: Oh, I see! Well, I don't even *want* anything, only that DANNIE can get his eyes fixed. Just think, ROSIE, if he could come home able to look at us. Wouldn't that be grand, now?

ROSIE: Oh, dear! Oh, boo-hoo-hoo! [*Rubs eyes.*] Boo-hoo-hoo-hoo!

KATIE [*putting arm about her*]: W'y, ROSIE, dear, what's the matter? Is it sick you are? Does your stummick hurt, ROSIE?

ROSIE: Oh, KATIE, w-w-what if—if— [*sobs*] DANNIE can see an' he don't think I'm pretty? I—I've got—freckles on my nose.

KATIE [*patting her*]: Now don't you be worrying 'bout freckles—they don't hardly show a mite, honest. DANNIE will think you look pretty, even if you ain't, but you are.

ROSIE: But I'd like to have my hair all fixed with my nice ribbon an' be dressed up.

Enter MR. MULLIGAN *who stands at the back listening*

KATIE: Oh, ROSIE, let's go an' fix us all up now, just to see how nice we can make us look, just as if it were that DANNIE'S comin' home tonight. That'll be fun. [*Claps hands and dances about.*]

ROSIE: Sure, an' it'll make us forget that we can't hang up our stockings tonight. An' I don't want the doll *very* bad, KATIE.

KATIE: Indeed you don't if dear DANNIE comes home so he sees us. Come on. [*They take hold of hands and run off merrily.*]

MULLIGAN [*coming up to center, shaking head and sighing*]: Poor little dears, what a pity it is, now, that they'll not be gittin' a single bit of a Christmas prisint. [*Sits.*] But what's a poor workin' man like mesilf to do whin Christmas comes round an' he hasn't a cint left? Sure, there's no father that's wantin' to do better by his childer than I do, but with all of DANNIE'S ixpenses I'm clean broke.

Enter MRS. MULLIGAN

MRS. M.: Now, PETER man, what's the trouble that's botherin' ye so's that ye look like as if there wasn't a patch o' sunshine as big as a pinhead left in the world? My, my, can't ye look a bit merrier than this on Christmas eve? An' whin DANNIE who's niver looked out of his eyes all the years he's lived, bless 'im, is gettin' 'em fixed so's he can see.

MULLIGAN: But NORA darlin', when a man's got sich a fine wife an' sich fine childer as I've got, an' likes to do well by 'em, it comes awful hard not to give 'em a bit of a treat at Christmas. [*Sighs.*]

MRS. M. [*putting hand on his shoulder*]: Now, PETER, not a bit more of that! We are going to have a wonderful Christmas, just in havin' DANNIE come home so he can see. Shame to think we need any prisint but that.

MULLIGAN [*sadly*]: Oh, NORA, that's one thing that's a botherin' me. I wint over to the hospital tonight 'fore I came home an' they wouldn't let me see 'im, not a-tall a-tall, I'm that worried fer fear he ain't a doin' jist right that I scarce know if I'm here or there, sure now.

MRS. M. [*Shakes head.*]: Dear, dear! [*Brightens.*] But it's not worryin' we'll be this night, whin it's Christmas eve. I'm sure that DANNIE is gettin' along fine. Maybe they're plannin' to let 'im come home tomorry for a s'prise an' had to keep 'im quiet. Wouldn't that be grand now?

MULLIGAN: Let's hope it's so, NORA. [*Sits with head bowed on hand.*]

Enter BILL JONES

JONES: Well, well! What's PETER weepin' 'bout this Christmas eve? [*Pulls out big colored handkerchief and wipes* MULLIGAN'S *eyes.*] I bet you're cryin' 'cause you think Santy won't bring you any present. [*Laughs.*]

MULLIGAN [*Laughs.*]: Quit pickin' on a little feller like me. Why don't you be teasin' NORA here, if ye wants to pick a quarrel?

JONES [*pretending fright*]: Not the missis—I've seen 'er bring you to time with the rollin' pin too often to make 'er mad at me.

MRS. M. [*laughing*]: Shame now to speak so whin you know me for the best natured lady that's standin' before ye at the prisint time.

JONES: Where's the two pieces of mischief?

MRS. M. [*innocently*]: An' who can ye mean?

JONES: I mean those two girls that grow more like their mother ev'ry day. They've got their father's beauty an' their mother's temper.

MULLIGAN [*laughing*]: Hivin pity 'em!

MRS. M.: Now see ye here, BILL JONES, I was goin' to make ye a nice cookie cut in shape of a pig fer a Christmas prisint, but I'll not do it if ye don't be after quittin' an' go to behavin'.

JONES [*folding hands piously*]: If I quit a-tall I'll have to quit behavin' 'cause I'm always good. My mother says I'm the best boy she's got—the other six boys bein' girls. But tell me now, where's ROSIE an' KATIE?

MULLIGAN: Sure, they're in their room fixin' up tryin' to see how nice they can make themselves look 'cause they want DANNIE to think they're pretty when he sees 'em.

MRS. M.: Now what a notion! But still, it's a good one. DANNIE niver has seen a one of us an' we'd all ought to look as fine as possible when he first lays eyes on us.

JONES: Say, if that's so, I'll have to go out an' try to order me a new face. No use in tryin' to fix this one up so's it'll look han'some.

MRS. M.: Now, now, MISTER JONES, I know many a lady would think ye're a fine-lookin' man.

JONES [*excitedly*]: Where's one of 'em? I'll take 'er to the movies an' buy 'er a sack of popcorn.

MULLIGAN: I guess I'll have to brush up some 'fore DANNIE comes home. I'd like for him to have sort of a likin' for the looks o' his homely ol' dad.

MRS. M.: You'll look good to DANNIE, PETER man, an' I guess wasn't ye called one the finest-lookin' young men in the town when I married ye?

JONES: My, my, how it's changed 'im—livin' with you, MRS. MULLIGAN.

Enter ROSIE *and* KATIE *dressed in white with bright ribbons and hair flowing*

MRS. M. [*throwing up hands*]: Now, now, who iver did see such fine-lookin' girls. Is it goin' to a party ye are?

KATIE: Of course not. We're just trying to see if we could fix so our DANNIE'LL think we're pretty when he sees us. Do you 'spose he will?

ROSIE: Do you 'spose he'll mind the freckles on my nose when I've got my pretty ribbon on?

JONES [*going close and gazing*]: Well, now, I didn't know you had freckles but I believe there are some here, 'bout as big as pancakes.

ROSIE [*slapping him*]: Now, you stop teasing me or I'll tell the policeman on you.

JONES [*striking attitude*]: Who's 'fraid of a policeman? If he says anything to me I'll eat him up.

ROSIE [*pointing finger*]: Shame to talk so! Santa Claus won't bring you any presents if you tell such bad stories.

MULLIGAN [*sighing*]: I guess he won't bring any of yez a prisint. We're too poor this year.

KATIE: Now, papa, we don't want a single present except for DANNIE to come home with his eyes all fixed so he can see us. Won't that be just a grand present? [*Dances around the room.*]

JONES: I'll say that's a fine present. Won't DANNIE think we're a *h—h—han'some* family? Hurrah for DANNIE. [*He joins hands with* KATIE *and they dance joyously around the room while the others laugh.*]

MRS. M.: We have been savin' up our earning's many a long month to git DANNIE'S eyes cured if there came a time when the doctor said it could be done. Now he's had the operation an' the doctors say they think the dear boy is goin' to see, bless 'im, an' we don't care, not a little mite, 'cause it's taken all our money an' we can't have any Christmas prisints, do we?

KATIE: No, no, all the present we want is for DANNIE to see.

ROSIE: I don't even care for a doll—if DANNIE won't think I'm homely.

MRS. M.: I want you all to say: We don't care for presents if DANNIE can see.

THE OTHERS: We don't care for presents if DANNIE can see.

MRS. M.: We don't care for a Christmas tree if DANNIE can see.

THE OTHERS: We don't care for a Christmas tree if DANNIE can see.

MRS. M.: We don't care for a Christmas dinner if DANNIE can see.

THE OTHERS: We don't care for a Christmas dinner if DANNIE can see.

MRS. M.: That's fine. Now we must remimber that all day tomorrow, which will be Christmas day.

ROSIE: Can't DANNIE come home tomorrow? We want him home Christmas.

MULLIGAN [*shaking head*]: I'm 'fraid he'll not be comin' fer a bit yet. Mebbe he'll be here for New Year's.

ROSIE [*clapping hands*]: Oh, won't that be lovely?

JONES [*to* MULLIGAN]: Say, PETER, an' s'posin' DANNIE was to see you now? Why don't you fuss up some an' let us see how it improves the looks of you? Put on a necktie f'r instance.

ROSIE: Oh, why not ev'rybody fix up an' we'll have a party an' play games. Then we won't mind 'cause we can't have a Christmas tree.

MRS. M.: That's not a bad idee, a-tall a-tall.

MULLIGAN: I'm thinkin' I'd look a mite better fussed up some. [*He and* MRS. M. *leave the room.*]

ROSIE: Oh, MR. JONES, I think you'd look nice with your hair parted in the middle, like the clerk in the store where mama buys things. I know DANNIE would like to see you with it that way. Won't you let me fix it?

JONES: My hair parted in the middle? Say, now, ROSIE, do you want to fix me so they'll steal me an' put me in the animal show at the circus?

ROSIE: Please let me try it. [*She runs off.* JONES *sits down meekly and sighs.*]

KATIE [*laughing*]: Maybe you'll look so han'some somebody'll fall in love with you.

JONES: If that's the case the sooner she fixes it the better.

Enter ROSIE *with comb*

ROSIE: Now you're going to look terrible nice.

JONES: Yes, terrible, but not nice. [ROSIE *fusses with his hair until she gets it parted in the middle to suit her; he sits making faces at which the girls laugh.*]

KATIE: W'y, you *do* look nice.

Enter MULLIGAN *and* MRS. M. *each considerably fixed up*

MRS. M. [*throwing up her hands*]: My, my! Who's this han'some man? [*Laughs as she looks at* JONES.]

KATIE: He's got his hair fixed so he'll look nice when DANNIE comes.

MULLIGAN: Well, now we're all fussed up, what shall we do nixt?

JONES [*looking at clock*]: I know. You all go in the kitchen an' stay while I hide Christmas nuts and candies around the room. When I clap my hands three times you are to come in and see how many you can find.

ROSIE: Oh, goody! I knew you'd do something nice if I parted your hair in the middle.

KATIE: That will be lots of fun. Come on. [*They all start.*]

JONES: Now, don't you come in till I clap my hands, an' if you dare to peek you can't hunt any nuts an' candy. Off with you. [MULLIGAN, MRS. M. *and the girls exeunt.*] Now, where is that stuff? [*Stands thinking, looking off at side.* MISS HAGAN, *in nurse's costume, appears cautiously at side and peeps in.* JONES *puts finger on lips for silence and goes over. They whisper, then both go off.*]

Enter JONES *and* MISS HAGAN, *helping* DANNIE *between them*

[JONES *moves easy chair silently to middle of room and they seat* DANNIE *in it and take off his coat and cap. Nurse fixes his hair and tie, then she stands at one side of room,* JONES *at the other and claps his hands loudly, three times.*]

Enter ROSIE, *running in quickly*

ROSIE: I'm going to find—oh, *oh,* OH!! [*Stops and looks at* DANNIE.]

Enter KATIE *very quickly*

KATIE: Did you find—oh, oh, *oh,* OH! [*Stops by* ROSIE, *gazing.*]

Enter MR. *and* MRS. MULLIGAN

MRS. M.: My, my! Such noisy— [*Screams.*] Oh,—w'y— [*Runs to* DANNIE.]

MULLIGAN: It's—DANNIE!

MRS. M.: It IS—DANNIE. [*Runs and kisses him.*]

KATIE [*clapping hands*]: It's DANNIE.

ROSIE [*dancing up and down*]: Our own DANNIE! [ROSIE *and* KATIE *stand close by him.*]

DANNIE [*looking from one to another*]: It's the same bad boy himself.

NURSE [*coming over*]: Yes, it is DANNIE, and he has come to enjoy Christmas eve with you. If you are real glad to see him he is going to stay for Christmas day, too.

MULLIGAN: Oh, DANNIE, can—you— [*Chokes and wipes eyes.*]

MRS. M. [*kneeling beside him*]: Oh, DANNIE dear, can you—see? [*Wipes eyes.*]

DANNIE [*looking from one to another and wiping eyes*]: I—I—

NURSE [*happily*]: Of course he can see. His eyes aren't strong yet but soon he will see as well as the rest of you.

MULLIGAN: Thank God! [*Wipes eyes.*]

MRS. M.: Oh, DANNIE, DANNIE! [*Bows head on* DANNIE'S *knees.*]

KATIE: DANNIE, can you see me?

ROSIE [*anxiously*]: DANNIE, you can't see that I have—have—

JONES [*coming over and interrupting*]: Say now, DANNIE, can you see well enough to tell that ROSIE has red hair?

ROSIE: I never have, have I, DANNIE?

DANNIE [*who has been looking from one to the other*]: Mother darlin', hold up yer head so's I can see you. [*She looks at him wiping her eyes.*] I always knew you were beautiful. [MRS. M. *rises.*]

MULLIGAN: She is that, DANNIE. [*He leans on back of* DANNIE'S *chair.*]

JONES [*striking attitude*]: Now DANNIE, ain't I han'some too? [*Puffs out cheeks, and makes pop eyes. Others laugh.*]

NURSE: DANNIE has had the bandages off his eyes part of the time for several days but we did not let you know because he wanted to give you a happy Christmas surprise. Tomorrow is going to be the merriest Christmas he ever has had and I'm sure the rest of you will be happy because he can see you all.

MULLIGAN: Sure we will that.

KATIE: And we don't want any other present except to have DANNIE see.

ROSIE: I don't even want a doll, I'm so glad to have DANNIE get his eyes

MRS. M. [*briskly*]: Oh, NURSE, dear, here we all stand so excited about DANNIE that we never even ask you to sit down. PETER, where's your manners, man? [JONES *politely places chair for nurse.*]

MULLIGAN: On the top shelf of the cupboard in a chiny tay-cup.

ROSIE: Shall I get them for you, papa? [*Others laugh.*]

MULLIGAN: No, I'm that upset over DANNIE that I can't make use of 'em yet awhile. [MRS. MULLIGAN *arranges chairs and all sit except the two girls, who lean against the back of* DANNIE'S *chair.*]

DANNIE [*who has continued to look at one after another*]: Why didn't you folks ever tell me that I belonged to such a nice-lookin' fam'ly?

JONES: That's what I say. Why didn't anyone tell him what a han'some fellow I am? I'll not stay here, I'm that put out about it. [*Slips from room.*]

MULLIGAN: Now this would be a grand Christmas eve if I jest had a few prisints for yez all. All the years we've been keepin' house, NORA, this is the first time I haven't given you a Christmas treat.

NURSE: Oh, I'm sure this is the finest treat you've ever given them, MR. MULLIGAN, to be able to have DANNIE'S eyes treated.

MULLIGAN [*shaking head sadly*]: But Christmas ain't Christmas without the treat.

Enter JONES *with large basket*

JONES: What's that about a Christmas treat? Well, here it comes. I met Santy Claus down on the corner an' he said a fam'ly who did so well savin' up money to get a boy's eyes fixed must have a little pay for it. NURSE, you might help me give these out. [*He puts basket on chair, takes out packages and hands to* NURSE *who gives them to family.*]

ROSIE: Oh, goody!

MRS. M.: Now, such a man!

JONES: Something for— [*studies over name*] PETER MULLIGAN. Well, he don't deserve it, but let him have it, NURSE. This is for—well, well—ROSIE. Queer that Santy remembered her when she's so full of mischief. And this is for—KATIE who's another one full of mischief. Here's a package for—MRS. MULLIGAN an' she's to wear it on Christmas day. Now here is something for DANNIE who has been a good boy while his eyes were being made well. This is for— [*pretends to study name*] w'y, it's for the good NURSE who has taken care of DANNIE. Here [*peeks into bag*] is some Christmas candy, but mind you, KATIE and ROSIE, that you don't make yourselves sick. Here [*peeps into bag*] are some nuts to go with the candy. Here at the bottom of the basket is something that I believe is for me—a nice, fat chicken for Christmas dinner.

ROSIE [*who has unwrapped her package*]: Oh, oh, *two* dolls!

NURSE: Isn't that nice to have twins?

KATIE: I have a pretty string of beads.

DANNIE: And I have a book with splendid pictures. Won't it be grand to be able to see them? Christmas is getting better ev'ry minute. I didn't know anybody could be so happy.

NURSE: My present is a nice box of candy. I certainly thank Santa Claus. [*Bows to Jones.*]

KATIE: I think it's sweet candy for a sweet lady.

JONES [*aside*]: That's what I think only I don't dare say so.

MRS. M.: I know I'll look nice, if I do say so myself as shouldn't— wearing this lovely collar tomorrow. My, my, how happy we are. Just as soon as tomorrow morning comes, KATIE, you an' ROSIE must run over with some of the nuts an' candy for the FLEMMING childers, poor little dears.

ROSIE: Oh, mama, can't I take one of my dolls to little MARY? I know she won't get any.

MULLIGAN: Sure, that will be fine, ROSIE.

NURSE: The best thing about Christmas is to be able to share our joys with someone else. [*Knock is heard;* KATIE *runs over and ushers in the visitors.*]

Enter MRS. O'BRIEN *and* PATSY, *each carrying a basket*

MRS. O'B. [*stopping short*]: Well, now, see who's here? Is it DANNIE himself?

PATSY: I'll be blessed! It's sure DANNIE. You young scamp, you, what'd you come home like this for without letting us know?

DANNIE [*laughing*]: Isn't it the fine Christmas joke I played?

PATSY: Just for that, you brazen scallawag, I'm a good notion to take my Christmas basket back home an' never let yez have a peep at what's in it. [MRS. O'BRIEN *and* PATSY *set down their baskets and shake hands with* DANNIE; MRS. O'BRIEN *kisses him and* PATSY *pats him on the shoulder.*]

ROSIE: An' DANNIE can see, he can.

DANNIE: Yes, I sure can see. MRS. O'BRIEN, you've got on [*he gives some items about her dress and hat*] an' it's nice lookin' you are, but not so han'some as me mother.

MRS. M.: Now, now, DANNIE, to talk so to MRS. O'BRIEN. [*She places chairs for the* O'BRIEN'S.]

MRS. O'B.: Niver ye mind, DANNIE, when I'm out with a bunch o' han'some wimmen on a pitch black night I'm as good-lookin' as any of 'em.

DANNIE: Tomorrow when I eat Christmas dinner I can see what ev'rything looks like.

PATSY:

Little DANNIE MULLIGAN'LL sit at the table,
Eating Christmas cake an' pies;
He'll pull out a plum on the end o' his thumb,
An' look at it with his new eyes.

DANNIE [*laughing*]: An' won't it be the best dinner I've ever had?

MRS. O'B.: It sure will, DANNIE, an' let me tell yez that the very reason it's goin' to be so good is 'cause I've brought yez over some fine eatybles in these baskets from mesilf an' some of the other neighbors as wanted to show our tinder affection for the MULLIGANS.

NURSE: Isn't that splendid, DANNIE, to have such lovely friends? I call it fine to be remembered this way when you've been having such a hard time.

MULLIGAN: I call it fine to be helped out when things have been bad for us in money matters. Me pocket-book has got so flat, payin' DANNIE's bills that I didn't have the where-with to buy a Christmas dinner.

MRS. M.: But now, praise be to our good friends, we can ask poor MRS. DUGAN an' little JIMMIE over for dinner with us.

DANNIE: That will be fine.

PATSY: Sure, now, I most forgot there's some candy here that's to be eaten on Christmas eve or it won't taste good a-tall a-tall. [*He gets a sack from his basket and passes around candy, each one taking a stick which they begin eating.*]

JONES: DANNIE, does candy taste better when you can see it?

DANNIE: It does that.

MRS. M.: I'd sure like to make a nice speech to thank these kind fri'nds fer all this Christmas joy they've gone an' brought to us, but me heart's so full I can't.

JONES: I'd be glad to make it for you, MRS. MULLIGAN, but my *mouth* is too full—of candy. [*Pops a piece into his mouth.*]

PATSY: We don't want any thanks. Christmas is the time whin we do things fer the pleasure o' doin' 'em. An' we're that glad 'bout DANNIE we feel like doin' a whole lot more.

Of all the merry Christmas days
That DANNIE ever did see,
Tomorrow'll be the best, you'll see,
Of any he ever did see,
'Cause DANNIE can see, you see.

MRS. O'B.: Now, PATSY, do be quittin' makin' up such foolishniss in yer silly head. Santy Claus won't be after bringin' ye any prisint if ye don't behave.

PATSY:

Little PATSY,—watsy—wause,
Didn't git nothin' from Santy Claus. Ha, ha!

KATIE: Let's play a game.

JONES: We used to play a game called "Kiss the Cook." When someone like MRS. O'BRIEN had made some Christmas cookies or cakes, the one who chased her an' stole a kiss got some of her baking to eat. [*Others laugh.*] Now I'm going to steal a kiss from MRS. O'BRIEN an' get a cookie.

MRS. O'BRIEN [*jumping up*]: Indade, ye'll not kiss me, MISTER JONES. [*She starts to run around the room as fast as she can go,* JONES *after her, the others cheering them and laughing.* KATIE *and* ROSIE *dance about and clap their hands.* JONES *bumps into a chair and falls onto the floor.*]

DANNIE: That's the first race I've ever seen.

MRS. O'B.: I know it's sorry ye are to lose the kiss, MISTER JONES, so I'll be after givin' ye a cookie. [*She gives him one from her basket.*]

NURSE: Now, DANNIE, it is getting time for a tired boy to go to sleep, so we'll have our song.

DANNIE: Oh, yes.

NURSE: DANNIE and I wrote this song for you to sing on Christmas eve. We want you all to help. [*She gives out pieces of paper with the words.*] It goes this way. [*She hums the tune of "Yankee Doodle."*] Let's stand by DANNIE to sing. [KATIE *and* ROSIE *kneel in front of him; his father and mother stand back of him;* MRS. O'BRIEN *and* NURSE *on one side,* PATSY *and* JONES *on the other. They sing*]:

Once DANNIE'S eyes were shut up tight,
He could not see a mite, sir;
The doctor fixed them good as new,
And DANNIE got his sight, sir.
Merry, merry Christmas day,
DANNIE now can see, sir;
He has brought home two good eyes,
He's happy as can be, sir.

MULLIGAN: That's fine! Let's sing it again. [*They sing it still more lustily.*]

MRS. O'B.: 'Tis home we must be goin' an' we wish the MULLIGANS a splendid merry Christmas.

MRS. M.: Peace an' goodwill on earth an' a merry Christmas to ev'rybody.

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